

For Immediate Release: Tuesday April 14, 2015  
Contact: Sara Twibell, NCDHD 402-336-2406

A children's dental sealant program was hosted by Santee Community School on April 8 and by Niobrara Public School on April 9. This is the first time a children's dental sealant program has ever been held at these schools. The sealant program was provided by North Central District Health Department (NCDHD) through their *Miles of Smiles* program, in conjunction with Dr. Brandi Dimmitt of Santee Dental Clinic. NCDHD *Miles of Smiles* coordinator Sara Twibell and Health Director Roger Wiese worked closely with Santee and Niobrara school administrators and school nurse Chelsey Chohon to make this outstanding program available to all children in preschool through 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

Dr. Dimmitt and two of her dental hygienists, Sandie Liska and Stephanie Kruse, along with nine staff members from North Central District Health Department and *Miles of Smiles* Registered Dental Hygienists Amie Dawson, Diane Alden, and Therese Sullivan all travelled to Santee and Niobrara to assist in conducting the program. They assembled four portable dental units in the school, which served as a temporary dental office. At Santee, 104 children who returned signed parent permission forms participated in the program, and 347 sealants were provided. At Niobrara, 77 children who returned signed parent permission forms participated in the program, and 292 sealants were provided. Children at both schools received a dental screening, sealants if needed, fluoride varnish, dental education, a toothbrush, and toothpaste. Dental sealants are white plastic coatings which are placed on the chewing surfaces of teeth to prevent cavities. A big thank you goes out to all of the school administrators and staff at the Santee Community School and Niobrara Public School for supporting this event!

The visit to Santee and Niobrara last week marks the third sealant program held by North Central District Health Department in their nine-county area, which covers Antelope, Boyd, Brown, Cherry, Holt, Keya Paha, Knox, Pierce, and Rock counties. The first sealant program in the district was held in March of 2014 at West Boyd School in Butte, with 135 children participating and 562 sealants provided. Rock County Elementary School in Bassett was the location of the second sealant program held in September of 2014, with 105 children participating and 292 sealants provided. This brings the total for all three sealant programs held in the district to 421 children participating and 1,493 sealants provided. All nine counties in the district are state-designated shortage areas for pediatric dentistry, making services like the NCDHD *Miles of Smiles* program critically important.

